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Agenda item 50
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 13 April 2015 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

In follow-up to the emergency consultations of the Security Council on 6 April, I convey once again the grave concerns of the Palestinian leadership about the dire situation of Palestine refugees in Syria as a result of the ongoing armed conflict there. In particular, we continue to call the international community's attention to the humanitarian catastrophe in the Yarmouk refugee camp.

As indicated in the briefing to the Security Council by the Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Pierre Krähenbühl, the situation in the Yarmouk refugee camp has precipitously deteriorated following the 2 April takeover of the camp by terrorists affiliated with ISIL and other terror groups. It is a situation constituting a direct threat to the lives of the nearly 18,000 Palestine refugees who remain in the camp, of the original 160,000 residents. Refugees are suffering death and injury, as well as further destruction of their homes, dispossession and displacement, as the wanton violence rages around them.

These recent dangerous developments follow a suffocating two-year siege of the Yarmouk camp, which has prevented all but minimal delivery of food, water, medicines and other vital civilian essentials to the camp residents, despite the repeated efforts of UNRWA to access the camp and provide care for the Palestine refugees, including under circumstances endangering the lives of humanitarian workers. This siege has inflicted widespread malnutrition, starvation, disease and poverty on the refugees, including 3,500 children, depleting their coping and survival abilities and leaving them in a severely weakened state. The situation in Yarmouk is one of extreme deprivation and desperation, fear and trauma, affecting every man, woman and child in the camp.

These shocking developments, along with the fact that the conflict has affected nearly every Palestine refugee camp in Syria — with the displacement of more than

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half of the estimated 540,000 Palestine refugees in Syria and the fleeing of around 80,000 of those Palestine refugees to neighbouring countries, mainly Lebanon and Jordan, along with the drowning of dozens of Palestine refugees in the Mediterranean Sea as they have attempted to escape the ravages of conflict — are a testament to the inhumanity of this deplorable situation and to the depth of the injustice borne by the Palestine refugees for more than six decades as they have awaited redress of their plight and fulfilment of their rights in accordance with international law and General Assembly resolution 194 (III) following Al-Nakba of 1948, when they were forcibly uprooted from their homes in Palestine with the establishment of the State of Israel and dispersed throughout the region.

Today, the disturbing reports of depravity and the appalling images that have emerged from the Yarmouk camp must be cause for alarm and action by the international community, particularly the Security Council. Yarmouk must not be allowed to become yet another stain of shame and disgrace for the international community, further symbolizing its abject failure to uphold international humanitarian law and human rights. We echo the appeals made by you that the world "cannot stand by and watch a massacre unfold" and that "the people of Yarmouk must not be abandoned", and we call on the Council to act urgently and responsibly to address this tragedy.

We recall Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014), as well as the press elements issued by the Council on 6 April 2015 in response to the critical situation in Yarmouk, and urge the full respect of their provisions. The obligation to protect civilians in situations of armed conflict must be respected by all parties. Human life must be respected and preserved. All efforts must be made to bring an end to the violence and ensure the safety and protection of the Palestine refugees and all civilians in Syria, including inside the Yarmouk camp, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Simultaneously, all efforts must be made to secure immediate, sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access and assistance to the camp's residents, as well as to ensure the safe exit of any civilians who seek refuge from the violence in Yarmouk. Humanitarian needs are massive and are growing by the day. We commend the efforts being undertaken in this regard by Commissioner General Krähenbühl and the Deputy Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy, and express our strongest hopes for the success of these efforts. Moreover, we commend the continuing efforts of UNRWA to provide emergency aid to the Palestine refugees in dire need in Syria and in the neighbouring countries as a result of this crisis, despite the very difficult and unstable circumstances that prevail.

At this time, we must also reiterate the official position of the Palestine Liberation Organization to maintain the neutrality of the Palestine refugee camps in Syria and the refusal to be drawn into the ongoing conflict, including in the Yarmouk refugee camp. We reaffirm our readiness to work with all stakeholders to bring an end to the aggression and to prevent a further calamity in the camp. We thus repeat our appeals for the exertion of all possible efforts to ensure the protection of the Palestine refugees and all civilians in Syria, in accordance with international humanitarian law, in order to spare innocent lives and avert further devastation. The Palestinian leadership fully shares the international community's hopes for a political solution to end the horrific conflict in Syria.

In closing, we reiterate that this tragic crisis reconfirms the extreme vulnerability of the Palestine refugees and the need for a just solution to their plight, in the context of a lasting Palestinian-Israeli peace and a comprehensive regional peace, objectives to which the Palestinian leadership remains firmly committed and continues to exert all efforts to achieve in accordance with international law, resolution 194 (III) and the Arab Peace Initiative.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 50, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

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Agenda item 107
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 13 April 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the following information.

On Saturday, 11 April 2015, the city of Aleppo became the victim of yet another crime. Armed terrorist groups deliberately fired numerous missiles at the peaceful civilian areas of Sulaymaniyah, Shayhan and Salahuldin, killing 19 civilians, including five children and nine women, and injuring 90 others, including 11 children and 17 women. The debris has not yet been cleared, so the final toll could be higher still. Some body parts have yet to be identified. There was also extensive damage to residential buildings and public and private property.

This crime was part of a series of terrorist reprisals against the stalwart people of Aleppo city, who have formed an impregnable barrier against the armed terrorist groups. It coincided with the consultative meeting that was recently held in Moscow and resulted in consensus on a number of important points. The regimes of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan and Turkey are therefore sending a clear message through their proxies, the so-called moderate opposition, in order to undermine any political solution to be agreed among Syrians without outside interference. That opposition has used new destructive weapons which were provided to the terrorists by those very same States. The weapons, which are supposedly non-lethal, caused several four-storey buildings to collapse on their innocent civilian residents.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic emphasizes that the terrorist operations could not continue without the ongoing direct support afforded to such terrorist *takfirist* organizations as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Free Army, the Army of Islam, the Islamic Front, the Nusrah Front, Liwa' al-Tawhid, Liwa' al-Fath, Ahrar al-Sham and the Ansar Front, organizations that espouse extremist Wahhabi ideology and whose fighters come from over 90 States. Nor could they continue if certain States — including France, the United Kingdom, Jordan and the United States of America, some of which are permanent members of

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the Security Council — did not guarantee their impunity and provide them with weapons, explosives and other lethal materials. The terrorist organizations' capacity to mount such deadly attacks will come to an end. The true scandal is that the States that are involved in shedding Syrian blood have prevented the inclusion of certain terrorist organizations, including the so-called Islamic State, on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities.

The Security Council must uphold its commitment to combating terrorism and extremist terrorist groups by implementing its counter-terrorism resolutions, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), in word and deed without politicization or double standards. It must cooperate and coordinate fully with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, which has been fighting terrorism for several years on behalf of all peoples of the world, defending humanity, justice and freedom against the destructive ideologies of extremism and zealotry.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is determined to continue combating terrorism in Syria. In accordance with its constitutional responsibilities, it will defend and protect its people. It therefore calls once again on the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to implement the relevant resolutions of the Council by condemning this terrorist act and taking action against the terrorist groups and their State sponsors, particularly the regimes in power in Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and France and certain other Western States.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 107, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Haydar **Ali Ahmad**
Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.